

well. So much for the geographical situation.

In the district of Putumayo dwelt a number of Indian tribes. It was never suggested they were civilized. It was equally never suggested they were either bellicose or treacherous toward the white man. On the contrary, they were docile, trusting, responsive to good treatment and uncorrupted. Under these circumstances, it is perhaps a marvel that they have remained so long uncontaminated by the worst aspects of western civilization which surrounded them. But so it was until 1886, when the attention of the outside first became directed toward the rubber possibilities of the country. In that year appeared on the scene the firm of Arana Bros., who on an arrangement with the Peruvian Government secured the monopoly of exploitation and commenced the work of rubber collection, tapping the trees on the lines of aiming at the most immediate profit, without much reference to the future either of the country or the Indians.

SLAVE TRADE INTRODUCED.

The only labor on the spot was that of the natives, and accordingly there is no mining the matter, the slave trade was introduced in possibly its worst guise. Indeed, there is hardly any parallel in the whole history of this nefarious traffic to the unrelieved horrors which speedily were introduced under the pretended system of paying the natives for the unremitting toll they were compelled to perform in turning to profitable account for others their own property, which had without the slightest consideration been wrested from them.

The Congo crimes were as child's play to the atrocities on the Putumayo. Fearing neither God nor man for the few Catholic missionaries protested in earnest, outspoken fashion, but in vain, while the Peruvian authorities either could not or would not intervene, the rubber crusaders employed the means of torture with all the refinements of modern ingenuity. At first it was fortunate that neither the British Government nor the public had any part, lot or responsibility in the campaign of greed, lust and blood. But this was all changed in 1905, when some thirty-six Barbadian negroes, British subjects, were engaged to act as deputies to the Latin American filibusters.

They were not worse than the men who employed them, but from that time a regime set in which was characterized by dreadful acts of cruelty and by crimes which were revolting in the extreme. These acts were not denied, but the excuse was put forward that the Indians had massacred some white settlers and had appropriated their arms. It would have been surprising had they not done so, for the invaders armed the youth of the tribes, just as was done on the Congo, and looted them as the defenceless community defenceless, since their simple weapons, such as the blowpipe and the ancient musket, had been purposely taken from them.

BRITISH COMPANY STEPS IN.

At this stage the concession for collecting the rubber was sold to the Peruvian Amazon Company, a British trading concern of admitted standing and high morals but, as it was afterward found, of astounding ignorance as to what was certainly, and would most unquestionably continue to be, the result of employing semi-white savages and full-blooded negroes in the prosecution of trading methods in which they were paid on commission and by results.

Rubber had to be secured, and the natives were compelled to secure it. There was no pretence of justice or fair treatment. Flogging by tapir midwives was introduced on such a scale and with such terrible results that the vast majority of the entire male population, and much of the female were seared with terrible wounds which often caused death. Adults were flogged because of their own shortcomings in rubber collection and parents for those of their little children, who were forced to stand by while the mothers were practically beaten to death. Men and women for defaulting in quantity or attempting to escape were suspended by the arms twisted behind their backs and tied together, to back off both arms and both legs of Indians, leaving them to a slow death on the pathways. One chief who refused to betray the refuge of his followers was so treated. It was a favorite practice to cut off the ears of living persons; in one case a man's ears were cut off, and his wife was burned before his eyes. So fiendish was the temper of the jailors that once when four Indians were hung up with their arms twisted behind their backs a boy went around and bit pieces out of all of them and then amused himself by swinging them backward and forward.

On other occasions they were drawn up by a chain fastened round their necks and attached to one of the beams of the house; the chain would be hauled up so that they would be half strangled, when they would be allowed to fall abruptly to the ground, after biting through their tongues.

BURN MEN AT STAKE.

But these were trifles. The committee took evidence which revealed an appalling category of crime. It was no uncommon practice to pour kerosene oil on men and women and then set fire to them, to burn men at the stake, to dash out the brains of children, to hack off both arms and both legs of Indians, leaving them to a slow death on the pathways. One chief who refused to betray the refuge of his followers was so treated. It was a favorite practice to cut off the ears of living persons; in one case a man's ears were cut off, and his wife was burned before his eyes. So fiendish was the temper of the jailors that once when four Indians were hung up with their arms twisted behind their backs a boy went around and bit pieces out of all of them and then amused himself by swinging them backward and forward.

The slave gangs often were starved. They died in their long marches under burdens as heavy as themselves. The chain gang often lived a life merely for the amusement of the thing and on day one man alone killed twenty-five persons, shooting some, cutting off the heads of others and hanging up the rest until they were choked with chains round their necks. One man tied up a boy and poured some kerosene oil over his long hair, set it alight, and then threw him into a fire. "The boy screamed out and begged to be taken out, but he was soon burned up."

No regard whatever was paid to age or sex. Women were killed as frequently as men. A mother sucking her baby would be caught on an expedition and beheaded with a knife. The child's brains were usually knocked out against a tree. Often they were tied up to trees and shot at. Sometimes they were put in rows and a bullet sent whizzing over their heads. One man had friends a man would kidnap a girl and send her to walk away from the house. He would then shoot her dead. Live fires were lighted under the old people. A man would be asked to blow down a rifle barrel for amusement; innocently he would do it and at once the trigger would be pulled and his head would be blown off. Families usually perished together. An Indian chief was burned alive in the presence of his wife and children; the wife was then beheaded and the children dismembered and thrown into the fire. Two hundred ladies a day was quite a



common penalty. The list of horrors might be continued indefinitely, but enough has been said to show its nature.

WOMEN A HORROR VICTIMS.

No woman's labor was safe, though marital affection and simple virtue were admittedly features of the tribal life. Moral offenses were perpetrated often under circumstances of fiendish ingenuity. For some reason one of the women offended her master and he at once had her hung up and scourged. Every old person was remorselessly slaughtered to stop them giving the younger generation good advice. To avoid leaving the traces of flogging a system was adopted of tying the victim's arms, fastening the bodies together and holding them under the surface of the rivers. They were usually dragged out half dead and sometimes actually drowned. Even when confined in the stocks they were treated with unspeakable barbarity. A man would go around with a club and batter the victim's body until death mercifully released him. Indeed, the whole country reeked with slaughter.

INDIANS FLOGGED TO DEATH.

Here are some of the passages from the official report:

Indians were frequently flogged to death. Cases were reported to me where men or women had died actually under the lash, but this seems to have been infrequent. Deaths due to flogging generally ensued some days afterward. In many cases where men or women had been so cruelly flogged that the wounds putrefied the victims were shot by one of the rascals (insubordinates) acting under the orders of the chief of the station, or even by this individual himself.

At one station I was informed by a British subject who had himself often flogged the Indians that he had seen others flogged on account of shortage of rubber. These boys were held by the neck to small to chastise and while the little boy stood terrified and crying at the sight, the mother would be beaten "just a few strokes" to make him into a better worker. Men and women were flogged because of their own shortcomings in rubber collection and parents for those of their little children, who were forced to stand by while the mothers were practically beaten to death. Men and women for defaulting in quantity or attempting to escape were suspended by the arms twisted behind their backs and tied together, to back off both arms and both legs of Indians, leaving them to a slow death on the pathways. One chief who refused to betray the refuge of his followers was so treated. It was a favorite practice to cut off the ears of living persons; in one case a man's ears were cut off, and his wife was burned before his eyes. So fiendish was the temper of the jailors that once when four Indians were hung up with their arms twisted behind their backs a boy went around and bit pieces out of all of them and then amused himself by swinging them backward and forward.

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Several informants declared that they had witnessed Indians hanging from the arms of trees, and the chain then suddenly loosed so that the victim fell violently to the ground. Among other practices one of the rubber collectors cut the ears of living Indians, a practice that to my knowledge was also indulged in by another subordinate still employed by the company at the date of my visit.

Some men had lost all sight or sense of rubber gathering; they were simply beasts of prey who lived upon the Indians and delighted in shooting their blood. I met no old Indian men or women and few had got beyond middle age. The old people, both men and women, respected for character and ability to advise wisely, had been marked from the first as dangerous, and in the early stages of the occupation were done to death. This I learned of an old woman who was beheaded solely for this reason.

Some of the wives of the agents were turned into courtesans of their own people. A young Indian woman was ordered by an overseer to take his rifle and go and shoot an Indian man, a prisoner at the time, and this order the girl had obeyed. She put the rifle to his head and killed him.

OTHERS CONFIRM CHARGES.

The unrelieved barbarity disclosed in this report does not rest alone on the testimony of the Barbadians men whose depositions accompany it. It is amply confirmed by independent statements. Sir Roger Casement adds the evidence of these Barbadian witnesses, from whose evidence two extracts only are appended, for they are typical of the rest. Here is one by Stanley S. Lewis, a native of Barbados.

I have seen Indians killed for sport, tied up to trees and shot at by Fonseca (one of the overseers) and the others. After they were drinking, they would sometimes do this. They would take a man out of the "cepo" and the him to a tree and shoot at him for a target. I have often seen the Indians killed thus, and also shot after they had been flogged. Others I have seen killed by the "chollinos," the small Indian boys being trained into "machetes." These boys were armed with machetes and they would cut their heads off against the tree stumps. I saw Fonseca do the following thing. He had an Indian nurse holding a child of his, a baby he had by one of his Indian wives. This nurse was quite a young girl, and she was carrying the baby and it poked up a leaf of tobacco and put it in its mouth. Fonseca came along just then, and because the baby was crying, and he saw the leaf of tobacco in its mouth, and when she was knocked about a lot and her mouth was cut he sent her down to the river to wash, and then when she came up he drew his revolver and shot her, and one of his men, named "Chollino," a nickname, his right hand was broken by one of the "cepos" came out and drew his revolver and shot the girl too, and so they killed her. Her body was buried.

BRUTE KILL A GIRL.

Another thing I saw was this. This girl, a girl, this was a girl that he had, and she was friends with me too, and with several of the boys. She was sent to wash clothes, and she went to a stream in the forest where he had told her not to go, so he took his gun and shot her right through the back and belly, and she fell down and cried out and lay there on the ground crying and died. Both those things I saw with my own eyes, just as I saw Indians tied to the trees and shot at, or shot after they had been flogged, or killed with machetes.

Another witness, a Barbadian, named Westernman Leavine, whose evidence is given in the third person, confirmed the statement made by Gonzalo Caporo, read out to him, who had declared what he saw in 1907. Caporo had been on the spot and made a statement on leaving the country at an earlier period. The statement made by Caporo that three old Indians and two young women, their daughters, were tortured by Normand, an overseer, in cold blood, was corroborated by Leavine. He saw this take place. As to the starving to death of Indians in the "cepo," it was a common occurrence, and the dead and stinking bodies left there alongside still living prisoners, he declares he more than once witnessed.

The statement made by Caporo as to an Indian chief who was burned alive in the presence of his wife and two children, and the wife then beheaded, Leavine says he remembers and was a witness to. He also remembers the occurrence narrated by Caporo of an Indian woman who was out to press by Normand himself, because she refused to live with one of his employees, as he directed her to do. He was a witness to the woman being set fire to with the Pentecost flag soaked in kerosene wrapped round her, and of her then being shot. A statement made by Caporo as to the ground round Andokea being won with skills was then read out by the Council General to Leavine. With regard to the statement of Pico Farana, another man who had made an earlier statement, he saw one child run and knock his own head against a tree being hung for the house inmates. He more than once saw Normand have an In-

dian's hands and legs tied together, and the man or woman thus bound thrown alive on a fire.

HE ALSO SAW INDIANS BURNED.

Alfred Hoyte, also a Barbadian, stated: "He saw Indians burned alive. They were hung up by Jimenez, one of the overseers, and burned alive. He saw this with his own eyes. He only saw one burned alive like this a man. Other Indians he saw burned, but they were already dead. Señor Jimenez ordered the Indian to be hung up with his arms behind his back and had a fire made under him and burned him alive and then gave him a ball." Pressed on the point as to whether others were killed by the same means, Hoyte affirmed: "There was a woman burned alive also. He saw people flogged very badly, and he had known Indians deliberately starved to death."

Clifford Quintan, a native of Barbados, stated he had seen a chief of section called Aurelio Rodriguez shoot Indians, men and women, and leave children into the river to drown. He saw plenty of Indians flogged, men as well as women. Some of them died before they were finished getting loaded they were tied on four spears. One day they came to an Indian house and caught all the Indians in it. There were men, women and children, some of them about a month old, quite small. All were killed except the little children. These were left alive in the house to die there, and their mothers were killed. Normand cut off the heads of all these Indians. Then they found a man and a little girl, quite a small child. The man was taken prisoner and the little girl was left in the house alone. She had been told by Rodriguez and Rodriguez ordered him to shoot her refusing to allow them to carry the child into the section and save her life. He obeyed under threats and shot the child. He had seen women and children, and he was going to shoot her. He shot her in the left breast, and she lay on the ground and died at once. She was left there and not buried at all.

HERE IS FINAL EXCERPT FROM THE EVIDENCE OF JAMES MAPPE, A BARBADIAN.

Witness had seen so many killed that he could not remember all of them. He had seen men, women and children killed because they would not work rubber. Some were shot, some were beheaded with machetes. He had seen women and children beheaded and the little babies taken from their mothers and thrown away alive, to die thus at other times they would smash their heads against trees or throw them into the river. One man killed the Indians because they had not worked enough, and after drinking was some Indian prisoners and inquired where they came from. He was told that they had not been long caught. He called the boys and sent the Indians out one by one to be killed. They were all shot. A man with one foot who could not walk was one of them. He went hopping along. They had been starved to death before this. After shooting them they had many burned also.

ALL TELL THE SAME STORY.

There are any number of witnesses, all of whom tell the same story of brutal and purposeless slaughter. Yet, remote and inaccessible, the Putumayo did not appear to the outside world until at last horrible stories began to leak out. After investigation the British company, acting on the best traditions, threw up the concession and went into voluntary liquidation. Señor Arana, the original concessionaire and the owner of the rubber, being appointed liquidator. Still no one can say that the evils are not even now going on.

The British Government is being pressed, after giving the Casement report, to take remedial action of some kind. For unless something is done the natives will be exterminated in less than a decade. Recognizing that the United States is the best power to represent to Peru the urgent need for better control, there has been considerable diplomatic correspondence with Washington. Peru, however, stands high in the good books of the United States, which, it is said, is not too desirous to exercise pressure.

MISSION TO HELP INDIANS.

As a result of the revelations regarding the condition of the Putumayo Indians, as revealed in the report of Sir Roger Casement, an appeal is being made for the establishment of a mission in the district. At first it was hoped that it would be possible to establish two missions, one a Catholic and the other a Protestant, and indeed a perfect system of cooperation with goodwill on both sides had been worked out between leading men of both faiths in Great Britain. The British Government, however, knowing that the Peruvian Government affords no recognition to any church save the Roman Catholic, requested its Minister at Lima to report whether a Protestant mission to the Putumayo would receive facilities from the Peruvian Government and what would be its prospects of success.

To this the following telegraphic reply was received:

LIMA, May 23, 1912.

Any application on behalf of such a mission would probably be met by an answer similar to that returned in 1907 when the Baptist Missionary Society proposed to send a mission to the Amazon Valley.

The answer was that such a mission would be contrary to Article III of the Peruvian Constitution, according to which Peru professes the Roman Catholic Apostolic religion, "which the State protects and does not permit the public exercise of any other religion."

In the circumstances I consider that no mission other than Roman Catholic would have any chance of success.

APPEAL FOR FUNDS.

The following appeal for funds has accordingly been issued to the British public through the medium of the leading newspapers.

Sir, The condition of affairs disclosed in the Parliamentary paper dealing with the region known as the Putumayo, on the Upper Amazon, where the primitive Indian tribes have been so ruthlessly ill-treated by the agents of a company that has its headquarters in England must fill the minds of all with sentiments of profound pity and compassion.

It is true that the Peruvian Government, which has had its attention called to the grave abuses, is trying to remedy them. But the district is a very remote one and the efforts of the executive must of necessity be primarily directed to administrative work and it is to be feared that unless collaboration is forthcoming from outside humanitarian sources the last remnants of these unfortunate people will speedily disappear.

While there are doubtless many people in this country who would wish to entrust any remedial undertaking to a Protestant body, it must be borne in mind that according to the Peruvian Constitution work of this kind would only be permitted if entrusted to the Roman Catholic Church.

It is therefore suggested that a Roman Catholic mission should be sent to the Putumayo, far away though it is and difficult as any work carried on under such conditions must be, for years to come the operations of these missionaries must consist less of abstract religious propaganda than of human fellowship inspired by compassion and desire to uplift and benefit materially. For this large sums will be required, both initially and in the direction of providing an annual income, but in view of the expenditure the church is itself prepared to make a sum of £15,000 will insure the definite establishment of a Christian mission on the Putumayo.

We therefore appeal for this sum not only to members of the Roman Catholic Church but to all those whose hearts may in any way have been touched by the recital of one of the most terrible tragedies which has resulted from the commercialism of our time.

The following gentlemen will be most pleased to acknowledge all subscriptions to that end and checks should be crossed "Putumayo Mission Fund." The Count Blucher, 224 Finsbury Pavement House, Finsbury Pavement, E. C. 2. Sir Roger Casement, C. M. G., Care Messrs. Williams Deacons Bank, Ltd., 20 Brixton Lane, E. C. George Pauling, Esq., Victoria Mansions, 22 Victoria Street, S. W. Messrs. Coutts & Co., 40 Strand, W. C.

The Count Blucher and Mr. Pauling have consented to act as treasurers and trustees of the fund, whose control will be in their hands and those of a committee to be formed residing in this country.

Percy H. Brooke of 22-23 Finsbury Pavement House, Finsbury Pavement, E. C., has undertaken to act as secretary to the fund until the amount hoped for has been raised, and he will gladly forward any further information to those wishing to know more about either the cause or the objects of the mission.

U. S. PROTESTED TO PERU.

That Country Now Trying to Efface Stain of Rubber Scandal.

WASHINGTON, July 6. The revelation of the atrocities committed on Indian rubber workers in Peru by agents of the British concessionaries has been the subject of diplomatic intercourse between the British Foreign Office and the State Department for more than a year. Copies of the Casement report are now in the hands of the State Department officials, who have been fully cognizant of all the details of the investigation.

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In this matter in the position of mutual friend of Great Britain and Peru. Through the representations of the State Department, made at the request of Great Britain, Peru is now endeavoring to efface the stain placed upon her by the horrible practices which she has permitted for twenty years.

The Government of Peru has already sent an investigator into the Putumayo district and more recently has appointed a commission to make an investigation of conditions in the rubber fields. The first man sent out confirmed in substance the charges of mutilation, torture and butchery of the Indians by the company agents, though his account was much less harsh in tone than the Casement report. On the strength of this man's findings, however, the commission was named by the Government to make further investigations and recommended such action as seems necessary for putting an end to the outrages committed upon the Indians.

The State Department believes that Peru is now doing what she can to remedy the situation and consequently should be permitted to proceed with her plans without outside interference. For this reason, when the British Foreign Office consulted the State Department in regard to the publication of the report of Sir Roger Casement, this Government suggested that publication be delayed until Peru had been given opportunity to try to stamp out the evil. To this suggestion the British Foreign Office consented, with the understanding that the United States was

to take up the question with Peru. Because of the peculiar relations of the United States with all the Latin American republics, the British Government in accordance with its normal policy was content to have the Washington Government act as intermediary.

Peru was then informed by the United States that she must be prepared to take the consequences of the attitude of the British Government if she did not promptly take measures looking to a suppression of the practice of rubber concessionaires. This warning proved sufficient and Peru set on to learn the state of affairs for herself.

Since that time the Casement report has been demanded of the British Government by Parliament, and its publication to-day was the result. The British Foreign Office notified the State Department of what was to be expected and asked if there were objections upon the part of Washington to a publication of the correspondence between the two governments regarding the Peruvian atrocities. The Foreign Office was informed that there would be no objection, provided that all the despatches were published, which would make it clear that the United States, far from desiring to lend encouragement to any concealment of the facts, wished only to spare Peru as much humiliation as possible, and to aid her in setting her house in order.

Most of the negotiations have been carried on in Lima, the capital of Peru. The British and American legations have handled the affair for their respective governments. H. Clay Howland of Kentucky has been the United States Minister there for the last year.

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